



The Ridgeline Trail System—A National Recreation Trail



A Little History

While little is recorded about the importance of Spencer Butte to the native Kalapuyan peoples, it is thought that the Kalapuyan name for the area was “Champ-a-te,” or Rattlesnake Mountain. With Euro-American settlement of the area, the Butte became a popular peak to climb, and a campaign to preserve it from development began in the 1930s. In true Eugene style, a major portion of Spencer Butte was purchased in 1938 through a grassroots campaign that collected contributions no larger than \$5, in order to let everyone “buy a piece” of the Butte. During the campaign, 90-year old former mayor and chairman of the Eugene Park Commission, F.M. Wilkins, said, “And remember, Eugene boys and girls will be

Trail Safety and Courtesy

- Stay on official, signed trails
- Keep right and pass on the left
- Keep dogs on leash
- Leave no trace—please pick up and pack out your litter
- Leave plants and animals where you find them for others to enjoy
- Mountain bikes:
 - Yield to pedestrians on shared use trails
 - Manage speed based on sight lines and trail conditions
 - Warn before passing or rounding blind curves

The 17-mile Ridgeline Trail provides community access to one of Eugene’s natural treasures. Designated as a National Recreation Trail by the National Park Service in 2006, the trail winds through the extensive Ridgeline Park system. Just minutes from downtown, visitors can enjoy magnificent vistas of Eugene, the Coburg Hills, the Coast Range, and even a few peaks in the Cascade Mountains. The jewel in Eugene’s “Emerald Necklace” is the 2,054-foot high Spencer Butte, which offers a panoramic view of Eugene and the southern Willamette Valley from its summit.

climbing Spencer Butte 50 and 100 years from today, to be inspired by looking over a city built out to the very foot of the Butte.” Later, in 1950, W.R. “Tex” Matsler, Parks and Recreation department director, first proposed a vision of a larger Ridgeline Park system, which took root when major new parks were purchased between 1970 and 1995. Then, in 1998 and again in 2006, Eugene citizens passed parks bond measures directing the city to acquire more ridgeline parkland. The Ridgeline Park system has now grown to 2,100 acres with the help of the community, generous donations, and multiple state and federal grants.



Protecting the Ridgeline’s Natural Resources

Our Ridgeline parks and their natural resources benefit us all in important ways, from keeping our water and air clean and cool, to reducing flood and wildfire risk, to providing a beautiful backdrop to our city. The trail system takes visitors through parkland with wonderful examples of Oregon’s native habitats. Douglas-fir forests and mixed stands of bigleaf maple offer lush, cool experiences year-round. The Ridgeline Park system also features oak woodlands, oak savannas, upland prairies and rocky balds, which are regionally very rare and have been identified as critical habitats for conservation. More than 200 wildlife species rely on these habitats. The City of Eugene and its Rivers to Ridges partners are taking important steps to restore these rare habitats in the Ridgeline Park system and neighboring lands.



Be Aware of Local Hazards

Poison Oak

Leaves of three, let it be! Poison oak is very common in the Ridgeline. It can be found year-round as individual stems, a shrub, or even a vine climbing up tree trunks. Wash yourself, your pets and your clothes thoroughly if you touch any part of the plant. The best way to avoid poison oak is to stay on the trail.



Northern Pacific Rattlesnakes

Occasionally seen during the warmer months near the rocky summit of Spencer Butte, the presence of rattlesnakes is a good indicator of the health of this ecosystem. They make every effort to hide or retreat during human encounters. However, if you see a snake, back away slowly and pass with plenty of space between you and the snake. Do not harm or kill these animals—this area is their home.

Cougars and Bears

The vast majority of hikers never see a cougar or bear. However, if you do encounter one, make yourself appear as large as possible, and speak loudly and firmly or shout. If you have children with you, pick them up off the ground, without crouching down or leaning over. Never turn your back or run from a cougar or bear—back away slowly and deliberately, always retaining your aggressive pose and continuing to speak loudly.



Trail Descriptions

Difficulty rating/distance

Wild Iris Ridge

Moderate/1.3 miles ⚡ 🚲

Eugene’s newest section of the Ridgeline Trail system provides the opportunity to enjoy rare upland prairie and oak habitat, with views of Spencer Butte and the West Eugene Wetlands. Create additional hiking loops and further explore this 250-acre section of the Ridgeline Park system on connected gravel maintenance roads. Visit in early spring to enjoy this area’s namesake, wild Oregon iris.

Blanton Ridge to 52nd & Willamette

Moderate/1.8 miles ⚡

This trail offers a secluded walk through a mixed forest of towering Douglas-fir and bigleaf maple. A high point near Solar Heights looks out to the north across the city. Beautiful with winter snow and soothingly cool in the summer heat, the trail follows a gently rolling grade.

52nd & Willamette to Fox Hollow

Moderate/2.0 miles ⚡

This is the longest single segment in the Ridgeline Trail system. Springtime visitors delight in abundant fawn lilies, flowering hounds-tongue and a chorus of songbirds. The trail also crosses several small, spring-fed tributaries of Amazon Creek.

Tie Trail to Spencer Butte Main Trail

Strenuous/0.8 miles ⚡

The “Tie Trail” connects hikers from the middle of the Willamette to Fox Hollow segment to the Spencer Butte Main Trail, which leads to the summit. Hikers walk through some of the oldest Douglas-fir forest in the city’s natural areas before joining the Main Trail at an opening in the forest canopy, where spring prairie wildflowers bloom and butterflies are encountered during the summer.



Spencer Butte Summit — Main Trail

Strenuous/1.1 miles ⚡

This is by far the most popular route to the summit of Eugene’s iconic landmark. Gradually climbing to the top, highlights include an artful dry-stone masonry causeway, mature Douglas-fir forest and wildflower meadows. As hikers climb above the tree line, the approach to the summit includes a new series of stone stairways that provide panoramic views.

Spencer Butte Summit — West Trail

Very Strenuous/0.6 miles ⚡

Perhaps the most challenging hike on the Ridgeline Trail, this less-traveled route begins with rock-lined paths. As you ascend, you’ll come to an area of exposed bedrock that may require scrambling and can be slippery in wet weather. When you begin the steep scramble just below the summit, watch for tree tags which mark the official trail. Please stay on the trail to protect the unique wildflowers in this area.

Fox Hollow to Dillard

Easy/distances vary by route ⚡ 🚲

(Biking permitted on part of this segment)

This gentle loop trail connects to both the Dillard East and Dillard West trailheads. The pedestrian-only section of the trail follows the ridgeline at an easy, level grade. Crossing through the Amazon Headwaters basin, pedestrians can make a loop by returning on the shared-use path. The shared-use path has a gentle grade, making it a good beginning route for mountain bikers. The Dillard Connector Trail, added in 2014, connects with the Dillard East Trailhead at Mt. Baldy.

Martin Street to Fox Hollow

Strenuous/1.1 miles ⚡ 🚲

This shared-use trail steadily climbs through the forested headwaters of Amazon Creek, where you are surrounded by bigleaf maple, Douglas-fir and Pacific yew. The trail offers the experience of Amazon Creek in its natural setting, before it becomes channelized through town. Near the Martin Street

trailhead, a spur trail provides an alternate route following the power line corridor to connect with the Rexius Running Trail.

Dillard East to Spring Boulevard

Moderate to Strenuous/1.0 mile ⚡ 🚲

Second only to Spencer Butte in elevation within the Ridgeline, Mt. Baldy offers lovely views north to Eugene and south to Camas Swale. The pedestrian trail climbs quickly to the summit, while the shared-use trail meanders through an upland prairie before entering the forest and descending down a steep and sinuous path to Spring Boulevard.

Ribbon Trail

Moderate/0.75 miles ⚡

Completed in 2009, the Ribbon Trail connects Hendricks Park to the Ridgeline Trail system. The trail climbs from this popular park, featuring a world-renowned rhododendron garden, up to 30th Avenue. Winter hikes offer views of Moon Mountain and the Laurel Hill Valley.

Hendricks Park Trails

Moderate/3.0 miles total ⚡

(Biking permitted on Old Road Trail)

Discover 12 pedestrian trails, totaling three miles, in the forested natural area of Hendricks Park. From the trailhead kiosk near the intersection of Fairmount Boulevard and Floral Hill Drive, follow trails south and west to explore the park’s wild side and to connect with the Ribbon Trail and adjacent neighborhoods.

Spencer Butte Challenge Course

Located just off the Spencer Butte trailhead, the course features high and low elements, ropes, ladders, and forms built among the trees. The course provides unique team building in a safe, facilitated environment for groups of all ages and abilities. **Reservations are required.** For more information or to schedule an event, contact the Eugene Recreation Outdoor Adventure program at 541-682-6324.



New Ridgeline Parks

The City of Eugene, guided by the community-endorsed Ridgeline Area Open Space Vision and Action Plan, continues to acquire natural areas that provide key connections between the Ridgeline Parks system and thousands of acres of regional parks and open space land between Fern Ridge Reservoir to the west and Mount Pisgah to the east. The goal of providing uninterrupted trails and habitat across the Ridgeline Park system and beyond also supports and refines the larger vision of the Rivers to Ridges Partnership, made up of 16 conservation organizations and agencies committed to protecting and enhancing the region’s land and water resources.

Recently purchased sites are shown on this map, but are not yet developed. Visit these areas at your own risk—they typically lack perimeter fencing, developed trails, wayfinding signs or designated parking. If visiting these sites, please respect park rules, private property and regulatory signage. To avoid being towed, do not block maintenance gates, or park on road shoulders or in other undesignated areas.

Suzanne Arlie Park

At 515 acres, Suzanne Arlie Park is the largest park in the city’s system. The expansive area includes rare prairie and oak habitats, and panoramic views. Visitors can access the park through a public easement located south of Lane Community College’s southeastern

Park Rules

Park users must:

- Keep dogs on leash and under control at all times
- Remove pet waste

Prohibited activities include:

- Smoking of any kind
- Possession or drinking of any alcoholic beverages
- Possession of glass containers
- Hunting, discharging of firearms or use of fireworks
- Camping
- Operation of unauthorized vehicles
- Littering or dumping

Park users are responsible for following all park rules, including those not listed here. A complete copy of Eugene Parks and Open Space rules is available at 1820 Roosevelt Blvd. or eugene-or.gov/parks.

Parks are closed from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

South Eugene Meadows

South Eugene Meadows features large areas of upland prairie, oak savanna and oak woodlands. Informal footpaths through the site offer access to headwater streams, rocky knobs and stunning views. This beautiful property will eventually help connect Wild Iris Ridge to 52nd & Willamette.

Murray Hill, Bloomberg, Coryell Ridge and Moon Mountain Parks

These Ridgeline sites do not yet have safe and adequate parking to support public access, but are stepping stones toward completion of the Rivers to Ridges vision.

Special thanks to all of the volunteers who help care for and maintain the Ridgeline Trail system. Learn how you can get involved at eugene-or.gov/parkvolunteer



Eugene Parks & Open Space

1820 Roosevelt Blvd., Eugene, OR 97402
541-682-4800
eugene-or.gov/parks



Ridgeline Trail Map

Ridgeline Trail System Legend

	Parking Lot		Ridgeline Park System
	Information Kiosk		Developed Parks
	Restroom		Contour Elevation (100' interval)
	Trailhead		
	Future Trailhead		
	Trail Junction		
	Roads		
	Creeks		
	Pedestrian Trail		
	Mtn. Biking/Pedestrian Trail		
	Gravel Maintenance Road		
	Unimproved Trail		
	Running Trail		

Help keep our parks and natural areas safe by reporting safety and maintenance concerns. Easy mobile report at eugene.or-gov/parkwatch

